

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A thermal spraying device comprising: a flame-generating means (1,2) for generating a flame and an injection means (3) for injecting a powder into the generated flame; said flame-generating means (1,2) comprising an end piece (1) out of which the flame is directed towards a substrate to be subjected to spraying; and said powder-injection means (3) comprises a frame element (6) that projects in the flame ejection direction beyond ~~from~~ the end piece (1) and the frame element (6) at least partly surrounds a flame zone extending from the end piece (1) and a plurality of radially oriented open through holes (9).

2. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim 1, wherein the frame element (6) covers at least 90 degrees (180 degrees) of a circumference around the flame zone extending from the end piece (1).

3. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim 1, wherein the frame element (6) covers at least 180 degrees of a circumference around the flame zone extending from the end piece (1).

4. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim 1, wherein the frame element (6) covers at least 270 degrees of a circumference around the flame zone extending from the end piece (1).

5. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim 1, wherein the frame element (6) has an inner periphery having a cross-section shape corresponds to the cross-section shape of the inner periphery of the end piece (1).

6. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim 1, wherein the frame element (6) defines a ring-shaped element.

7. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim 1, wherein ~~at least a part of the frame element (6) that projects beyond the end piece (1) in the flame ejection direction comprises~~ there are greater than ten radially oriented open through holes (9).

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim [9] 1, wherein the plurality of radially oriented open through holes (9) are evenly distributed around a periphery of the frame element (6).

11. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim [9] 1, wherein the end piece (1) has an inner diameter d and the frame element (6) has a projection distance p , and $0.5 d < p < 6 d$.

12. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim [9] 1, wherein the end piece (1) has an inner diameter d and the frame element (6) has a projection distance p , and $0.5 d < p < 2 d$.

13. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim 1, wherein the end piece (1) has an inner diameter d and a projecting part of the frame element (6) has a corresponding inner diameter D in which is at least as great as d .

14. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim 1, wherein the end piece (1) has an inner diameter d and a projecting part of the frame element (6) has a corresponding inner diameter D approximately 1.2 times as great as d .

15. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim 1, wherein a plurality of powder injection ports (5) are distributed around the inner periphery of the frame element (6) and are oriented to direct injected powder towards a central flame.

16. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim 15, wherein the plurality of powder injection ports (5) are evenly distributed around the inner periphery of the frame element (6).

17. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim 15, wherein each of the plurality of powder injection ports (5) further comprises a nozzle inserted in a radial opening through the

frame element, and at least one of the open through holes (9) is adapted for accommodating a nozzle (5) therein.

18. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim 1, wherein the frame element (6) is detachably attached to the end piece (1).

19. (Original) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim 1, wherein the flame generated by the flame-generating means is a plasma jet.

20. (New) A thermal spraying device comprising: a flame-generating means (1,2) for generating a flame and an injection means (3) for injecting a powder into the generated flame; said flame-generating means (1,2) comprising an end piece (1) out of which the flame is directed towards a substrate to be subjected to spraying; and said powder-injection means (3) comprises a frame element (6) that projects in the flame ejection direction beyond the end piece (1); the frame element (6) at least partly surrounds a flame zone extending from the end piece (1) and at least two radially oriented open through holes (9), which allow for passage of any medium through the holes.

21. (New) The thermal spraying device as recited in claim 20, wherein at least one of the at least two open through holes is threaded to allow for engagement with a powder injection nozzle.